

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 IGA-02 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 OMB-01 TRSE-00

DRC-01 /156 W

----- 069767

R 111630Z MAR 74

FM AMCONSUL LUANDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2493

INFO AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

USMISSION NATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MIL, AO

SUBJECT: MILITARY BRIEFING FOR PRESS IN LUANDA

BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED

1. MAIN POINTS MADE BY COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF LUZ CUNHA AND STAFF
OFFICERS IN SURPRISE BRIEFING FOR ANGOLAN PRESS ON MARCH 8
WERE:

A) NETO-CHIPENDA RIVALRY: FOR FIRST TIME THIS SPLIT CONFIRMED
PUBLICLY BY PORTUGUESE. THEY STATED THAT BOTH FACTIONS OF MPLA
HAVE TRIED SEVERAL TIMES TO ASSASSINATE OTHER'S LEADER.
PORTUGUESE ASCRIBE PRESENT LOW STATE OF MPLA PARTLY TO THIS -
AND PARTLY TO PORTUGUESE MILITARY PRESSURE.

B) NATO: STAFFER CALLED ATTENTION TO PRESSURES FROM WITHIN NATO
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TO FORCE IT TO CURTAIL AID TO PORTUGAL, THEN STATED THIS AID DID

NOT AMOUNT TO MUCH ANYWAY.

C) SOUTH AFRICA: CINC REVEALED HE MADE A "RECENT" VISIT TO SOUTH AFRICA TO COORDINATE MILITARY MATTERS WITH S.A. DEFENSE OFFICIALS. SA HE ADDED, IS THREATENED BY SAME MENACE AS ANGOLA.

D) GUINEA AND MOZAMBIQUE: REFERENCE WAS MADE TO SITUATIONS IN THE OTHER TWO AFRICAN TERRITORIES, WHICH, OBLIQUELY, LUZ CUNHA CONCEDED WERE WORSE THAN ANGOLA'S.

E) ANGOLANS IN ARMED FORCES: LUZ CUNHA SET A FIGURE OF 52 PERCENT AS THE NUMBER ANGOLANS (WHITE AND BLACK) IN PORTUGUESE MILITARY FORCES HERE. THIS FIGURE INCLUDES DGS-RUN FLECHAS AND UNSTATED NUMBER OF PARA-MILITARY TROOPS (OPVDCA) THAT REPORT TO DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS, NOT MILITARY COMMANDERS.

F) SITUATION IN ZAIRE: CINC BELITTLED REPORTS OF TROOP BUILD UP ON ZAIRIAN FRONTIER BY STATING THAT THESE MERELY PART OF MANEUVERS NOW TAKING PLACE IN VICINITY OF QUITONA. HE ADDED THERE IS AMICABLE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MILITARY OF PORTUGAL AND ZAIRE IN BORDER AREAS.

G) FNLA: STAFFER ADMITTED FNLA SUCCESS IN COERCING LARGE NUMBERS OF RECRUITS INTO TRAINING CAMPS IN ZAIRE BUT REITERATED THEY THEN ARE NOT DEDICATED SOLDIERS, THEY DO NOT KNOW TERRAIN IN ANGOLA, AND WILL DESERT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

H) UNITA: STAFFER DISMISSED UNITA'S BRIEF ACTIVITY IN EARLY JANUARY AS A ONE-TIME HAPPENING AND ADDED IT ONLY SUCCEEDED BECAUSE OF MPLA'S DEFAULT. END UNCLASSIFIED

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2. COMMENT: CONSPICUOUSLY NOT MENTIONED WAS CABINDA, WHICH CONTINUES TO WORRY TOP COMMAND WHO SKITTISH ABOUT DRAWING ATTENTION TO EXCLAVE'S VULNERABILITY. BRIEFING BROKE LITTLE NEW GROUND AND WILL PROBABLY PASS UNNOTICED BY ANGOLANS WHO TAKE A "WHAT, ME WORRY?" ATTITUDE TOWARD FAR-OFF INSURGENCY THAT PRESENTS THEM NO IMMEDIATE HAZARDS OR SERIOUS DIFFICULTIES. SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS ARE QUESTIONING MOTIVES AND TIMING OF BRIEFING BY LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CINC WHO USUALLY RETICENT AND NOT GIVEN MUCH TO PUBLIC EXPOSURE. BY PROMOTING ANGOLAN SUCCESS STORY HE MAY WELL HAVE BEEN SEEKING TO CONTRAST MILITARY ROLE HERE WITH SPINOLA'S "FAILURE" IN GUINEA. THIS WOULD CERTAINLY ACCORD WITH HIS WELL-KNOWN DISLIKE AND ENVY OF SPINOLA.
BRIGGS

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